



**COMMANDER, U.S. PACIFIC COMMAND
(USPACOM)
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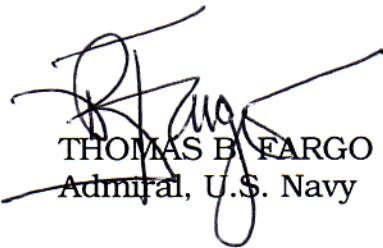
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Secure waterways are vital to the peace and prosperity of the entire Asia-Pacific region. These waters provide for trade and transit of vital economic resources on which the growing world economies depend. The seas, and the resources that flow through them, must be both shared and protected.

Transnational threats today pose a significant risk to the security of the maritime environment. These threats include terrorism, trafficking in humans and drugs, movement of illicit cargo, and piracy. All may take advantage of weakly controlled or ungoverned sea space. The Regional Maritime Security Initiative (RMSI) will require national and international coordination to build consensus and take the necessary actions to counter transnational threats in the maritime domain.

The common goal of RMSI is to develop a partnership of willing nations to enhance capabilities and leverage capacities through unity of effort to identify, monitor, and intercept transnational maritime threats consistent with existing international and domestic laws. This cooperative effort will maximize the application of available resources so that each participating nation has timely information and the capabilities needed to act against maritime threats in its own territorial seas. The ultimate decision to participate in maritime security activities, including information sharing with other states or acting against a threat, remains voluntary and sovereign for each participating nation.

The objective is to increase situational awareness by sharing information, to build responsive decision-making architectures, to enhance maritime security capacities, and encourage voluntary cooperation so that nations can take action to enforce domestic and international law. These combined actions will provide a clear picture of the maritime environment, contribute to the security of international and territorial waters and create an environment hostile to terrorists and other transnational threats.


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